



Economic Affairs Interim Committee

60th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

KEN HANSEN--Vice Chair
ROY BROWN
FRANK SMITH
DONALD STEINBEISSER

HOUSE MEMBERS

SCOTT MENDENHALL--Chair
MIKE MILBURN
MICHELE REINHART
BILL THOMAS

COMMITTEE STAFF

ANDREW GEIGER, Lead Staff
BART CAMPBELL, Staff Attorney
DAWN FIELD, Secretary

MINUTES

August 17, 2007

Room 172, State Capitol
Helena, Montana

Please note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed. Committee tapes are on file in the offices of the Legislative Services Division.

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Please note: These minutes provide abbreviated information about committee discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. The minutes are accompanied by an audio recording. For each action listed, the minutes indicate the approximate amount of time in hours, minutes, and seconds that has elapsed since the start of the meeting. This time may be used to locate the activity on the audio recording.

An electronic copy of these minutes and the audio recording may be accessed from the Legislative Branch home page at <http://leg.mt.gov>. On the left-side column of the home page, select *Committees*, then *Interim*, and then the appropriate committee.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE CALL

REP. SCOTT MENDENHALL, Chair
SEN. KEN HANSEN, Vice Chair

SEN. ROY BROWN
SEN. FRANK SMITH

REP. MIKE MILBURN
REP. MICHELE REINHART
REP. BILL THOMAS

MEMBERS EXCUSED

SEN. DONALD STEINBEISSER

STAFF PRESENT

ANDREW GEIGER, Lead Staff

PAT MURDO, Staff for HJR 48 and SJR 13

Sue O'Connell, Staff for Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee

DAWN FIELD, Secretary

AGENDA & VISITORS' LIST

Agenda, Attachment #1.

Visitors' list, Attachment #2.

COMMITTEE ACTION

The Economic Affairs Interim Committee:

- voted to rescind action taken at its organizational meeting to form a joint subcommittee with the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee for the purposes of studying HJR 48;
- voted to approve formation of an Economic Affairs subcommittee on HJR 48;
- agreed on Miles City as the next meeting location; and
- suggested that the next meeting date be finalized soon for the week of October 8-12.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

REP. MENDENHALL called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.. Members identified themselves as being present via the telephone, SEN. STEINBEISSER did not participate in the teleconference call.

REP. MENDENHALL said that the purpose of the meeting was to deal with the interim study assignments issue, due to the decision made by the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee (CFHHS) to not create a joint subcommittee with the Economic Affairs Interim Committee (EAIC) for the SJR 15 study. REP. MENDENHALL said that it no longer made sense to have a joint subcommittee for HJR 48 in terms of meeting efficiency. He said that he would rather address HJR 48 as a full committee study because as such, it would more easily follow the EAIC's meeting schedule around the state. He asked the members for their input.

Andrew Geiger, Research Analyst and Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD), pointed out that the conference call was necessary to deal with the study resolutions before the

Committee could proceed with its work. He noted for the record that several members of public were present and that public comment would be taken later in the meeting

SEN. HANSEN agreed with REP. MENDENHALL's points that HJR 48 should stay with EAIC and would mesh well with the Committee's desire to hold statewide meetings.

REP. BROWN and REP. MILBURN also agreed.

REP. REINHART supported retaining a joint subcommittee with CFHHS to study HJR 48.

SEN. SMITH suggested that if a subcommittee approach is going to be used, that meetings should be held in Helena the day before the full committees meet. He said that many medical experts and insurance experts are located in Helena and would be a good resource for the Committee. REP. MENDENHALL said that the issue is whether the EAIC wishes to continue with a joint subcommittee with CFHHS to study HJR 48 or to rescind the vote for a subcommittee and take a new vote to keep HJR 48 as an EAIC study. SEN. SMITH said that he liked REP. REINHART suggestion to keep HJR 48 as a joint subcommittee with CFHHS.

SEN. HANSEN asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

SEN. HANSEN asked if Sen. Steinbeisser has provided input on the issue. Mr. Geiger said that he has discussed the issue with Sen. Steinbeisser but didn't have a definitive opinion from the senator.

REP. THOMAS said that he would like to know why the CFHHS Committee rejected the proposal to do SJR 15 as a joint study and that in his opinion, placing both study resolutions in one joint subcommittee would have been the most efficient approach.

Sue O'Connell, Research Analyst and CFHHS Staff, LSD, said that the CFHHS members felt that HJR 48 was too extensive to do as a joint study and would stretch subcommittee resources. She said that CFHHS also wanted all eight of its members to be fully involved with the SJR 15 study.

REP. MILBURN said that having a joint HJR 48 subcommittee and out-of-town meetings would stretch resources too thin. REP. MENDENHALL agreed, saying that it would not make sense to have a subcommittee meeting in Helena one day and an out-of-town meeting, in Miles City for example, the next day.

REP. BROWN said that he supports holding out-of-town meetings and taking HJR 48 on as a full Committee study. He said that an EAIC subcommittee could be appointed to do a lot of the prep work in advance of the full Committee meetings which would allow the actual meeting to be more productive.

REP. MENDENHALL asked for public input.

Pat Murdo, Research Analyst, HJR 48 and SJR 13 Staff, LSD, briefly discussed the decision by CFHHS to include SJR 15 but not HJR 48 in a joint subcommittee.

REP. THOMAS **moved** to form an EAIC subcommittee to deal with HJR 48 and not address it as a joint subcommittee with CFHHS. SEN. HANSEN asked to add that the study will follow the full committee. Mr. Geiger said that the Committee must first vote to rescind its original action to form a joint subcommittee and then vote to form a new subcommittee.

REP. THOMAS withdrew his motion and **made a new motion** to rescind the EAIC decision to form a joint subcommittee with CFHHS.

Mr. Geiger asked that a roll call vote be taken. The **motion passed** 7-0 (Attachment #4).

REP. THOMAS **moved** to form an EAIC subcommittee to deal with HJR 48. He said that he still supported the idea of working with CFHHS and suggested that the two could interface on the study issues when appropriate.

Mr. Geiger clarified that REP. THOMAS' motion would not include members from any other interim committees. REP. MENDENHALL added that the subcommittee would meet in conjunction with the full committee meetings, wherever they may be.

Ms. Murdo said as staff to SJR 15 and HJR 48, she would create an interested persons list to keep everyone informed. She said that she would also make regular reports to both committees.

The **motion passed** on a 7-0 roll call vote (Attachment #5).

REP. MENDENHALL said that it was his inclination to appoint the same four members to the EAIC subcommittee as had been appointed to the joint subcommittee. REP. BROWN asked who those four members were. It was reported that the four members were REP. MENDENHALL, REP. REINHART, SEN. STEINBEISSER, and REP. THOMAS. Ms. Murdo said that two Democrats and two Republicans were appointed, versus two House members and two Senate members.

TAPE 1 SIDE B

REP. MENDENHALL said without objection, he will reappoint the same four members to the new subcommittee.

Mr. Geiger asked to discuss meeting dates and travel plans. He said that while the Committee wishes to hold out-of-town meetings, outreach has to be balanced with budget considerations and state agency oversight issues. He said that additional travel funds may be available from Legislative Council and that the Council has the issue of interim committee travel expenses on its September meeting agenda. He suggested that REP. MENDENHALL contact Susan Fox, Executive Director, LSD, to discuss this issue further.

REP. MENDENHALL thought that travel costs could be trimmed by using a state motor pool van and that Committee members and staff living in or near Helena could travel together. He suggested Miles City as the location for the first meeting and said that the SJR 13 study (value added ag products) would be an agenda item because of all of the ag businesses in eastern Montana. He suggested Fort Keogh specifically as a destination site. He said that local county and city officials could also be a good source of information and asked that they be invited to offer public comment on their perspective.

Mr. Geiger added that meeting with local officials would also provide valuable information for the HJR 28 study of business infrastructure.

SEN. HANSEN said that all of the suggestions were very good, including using a state travel van to trim expenses. He asked if broadcasting ability is available for out-of-town meetings. Mr. Geiger said that there is no audio broadcast capability for out-of-town meetings but that the meeting would be recorded on audio cassette tapes. SEN. HANSEN asked if the meeting minutes will be available on the internet. Mr. Geiger said a written summary of minutes would be available.

REP. REINHART asked what the status is of the other study assignments and if they have been factored into travel plans as well. REP. MENDENHALL said that several of the studies are more complicated and in depth than others and that the needs of each will be taken into consideration when planning future meeting locations. REP. REINHART asked if this issue would be on the next meeting agenda. REP. MENDENHALL said that it would be.

Mr. Geiger said that as committee chair, REP. MENDENHALL may be asked to attend the September meeting of Legislative Council. He asked the Committee to discuss potential meeting dates for October. After discussion, it was agreed that a meeting would be held sometime the week of October 8-12.

REP. THOMAS asked suggested that the chair, vice chair and Mr. Geiger meet and plan the committee work schedule. Mr. Geiger said that the work plan is already being drafted and will be available for final approval at the Miles City meeting in October.

Mr. Geiger thanked the Committee members for their input.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Committee, REP. MENDENHALL adjourned the meeting at 12:47 p.m.